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Library Trustee Minutes 04/14/2009

Robbins Library Board of Trustees
Minutes
April 14, 2009

Call to Order

Chairman Katherine Fennelly called the meeting to order at 7:15. Attending were trustees Heather Calvin, Kathryn Gandek-Tighe, Brigid Kennedy-Pfister, Barbara Muldoon, Frank Murphy, and Joyce Radochia. Also attending were the library director, Maryellen Loud, and the director of the Arlington Chamber of Commerce, Michele Meagher.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of March 10 were read. Ms. Radochia's absence from that meeting was noted, and the minutes were approved as corrected.

Community Time

No unscheduled members of the community were present.

Michele Meagher, Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Meagher asked permission from the board for the Chamber to use the Community Room for a series of three tutorials designed to train businesses in the use of the Internet. Due to increased participation and the resulting increased cost of workshop materials, mailings, and other incidental expenses the Chamber would like to charge the participants a fee to cover those expenses. In the past the Chamber has used local restaurants for some of its programs but it prefers the comfort and convenience of the library. Ms. Meagher noted that while these programs provide small businesses with an opportunity to market themselves, they also showcase library resources and raise awareness of the materials available in the business section. Trustees asked Ms. Meagher several questions; after she left, the trustees discussed the request in detail. The consensus of the board was to charge a rental fee of \$25/hour for each event, and to ask the Chamber to have library flyers about Sunday openings/fundraising available to seminar attendees.

Communications

Ms. Loud read an invitation to the trustees to attend the annual meeting of the Boys and Girls Club. Ms. Loud will represent the library.

Director's Report

Trustees read the March Director's Report, as Ms. Loud highlighted some of the major issues. Particularly noteworthy is the increasing number of patrons who are experiencing significant stress due to financial difficulties/job loss. Handling a distraught patron with tact with a minimum of disruption to library routine can be a

challenge to staff. Ms. Calvin asked how this year compares with last year's usage and Ms. Loud said that usage is up 10%. In the event that the *Arlington Advocate* does a story on the library, the trustees agreed that statistics should be made available to the reporter.

Ms. Loud spoke about the memo from Juliana Rice, Town Counsel, concerning the legal requirements for the acceptance and use of gifts or donations made to the library. In her memo she cited Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44, Section 53A. The board raised questions about the legal requirements noted and Ms. Loud will follow up on these. Mr. Murphy will seek clarification from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

The Community Read for this year is a choice of four books about the "boys from Sudan." The Sudanese Cultural Center will arrange for the programming.

Trust Fund Budget Report

Ms. Muldoon reviewed all the funds with the board, noting what has been spent and what remains to be spent.

Russell Fund Budget Report

Since it is likely that \$30,000 will be available for FY 2010, down from approximately \$40,000 in the previous year, the budget must be cut. As the value of the fund is down about \$300,000 since last year, it would be useful to have a "rolling average" from the last five years in order to plan appropriately. We will ask for this information from the town treasurer.

Ms. Loud said that because there was no author program at Ottoson Middle School this year, there is \$1,000 left. She requests that it be carried over to next year in order to sponsor two authors that the school has requested. In order to carry this amount over to next year it may be necessary to ask for permission from the fund donor, Gordon Russell. The trustees agreed to this request.

Fundraising Update

After reviewing the drafts of the Sunday opening fundraising letters, one to last year's donors and the other to new donors, the trustees suggested a few changes. Ms. Gandek-Tighe raised the question of involving children in fundraising for the library through the schools, but the board was opposed to this. Trustees will individually and collectively gather data on potential donors, with the aim of bringing in new names. Ms. Fennelly will research vehicles for making monthly donations to the library.

Long Range Plan Update

Independent facilitators will lead several focus groups, which represent all segments of the community as well as staff and trustees. There will also be a two-day retreat for representatives from the trustees and staff to review the mission statement and draft goals and objectives. By the end of June Ms. Loud expects to have a report from the consultant. She will write the plan in July and August, and have it ready for the trustees' review and approval in September.

Amnesty Week

The consensus of the board was to approve an amnesty week to be held in May.

Annual Report for the Public

Ms. Loud described a report sent by the Massachusetts Library Association, "A Day in the Life of a Library" which captured the sentiments of people with photographs and quotations. Inspired by this idea, the board agreed that a report combining sentiments (and perhaps photographs) with statistics would make a lively and readable report for

general distribution. This report is placed on the seats of town meeting members each year.

Margaret Spengler Memorial Committee Update

Ms. Radochia gave an update on the work of the memorial committee. The committee proposes to change the name of Library Way to Margaret H. Spengler Way and to install a memorial plaque, consisting of text and a bas-relief of Ms. Spengler, mounted on a rock, on the grounds of Robbins Library. No public funds will be sought for this project; at some point the committee will seek donations from private donors. In order for this project to proceed a full proposal will need to be made to the Board of Selectmen and the Robbins Library Board of Trustees.

Art Collection Policy

This policy will be reviewed at the May meeting.

Donation, Bequests, and Gift Policy

Ms. Gandek-Tighe moved that the policy be accepted as amended; Ms. Kennedy-Pfister seconded the motion and the board approved unanimously.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on May 12 at 7:15 p.m.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce H. Radochia